



Nevada Department of Agriculture

Director, Don Henderson

Activities & Achievement Report

February, 2005

Administration

- The Department hired a new Administrative Services Officer, Doug Perry to fill the position vacated by Rick Gimlin. Doug has been with the State of Nevada for almost 15 years, most recently as an Institutional Rates Analyst for the Medicaid program. He has also been with Public Employers Benefit Program, the Department of Taxation and the Secretary of State's Office. Doug has a degree in Accounting from the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and is an Air Force veteran.
- Rick Gimlin and Doug Perry met with Mike Nolan from Budget Division and Jeff Ferguson from the Legislative Counsel Bureau to discuss the Department's cost allocation plan. As a result of this discussion, the Department will use an improved methodology to include revisions resulting from the allocation plan, which will eliminate maintenance decision units related to changes in the allocation schedules.
- The Department received approval from the Public Employee's Retirement System (PERS) for two recently retired employees, to work a limited number of hours during their first 90 days of retirement. Dr. Bruce Branscomb and Jean Osborne will be able to work up to 30 calendar days during the period of January through March without jeopardizing their retirement benefits. The Department looks forward to having Bruce and Jean help us out.

Veterinary Science

- Dr. Thain participated in the 2005 UNR Cattlemen's update. Dr. Thain gave a presentation on "Premise I.D. in Nevada: When, Where, How" to more than 450 producers throughout the state.

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- Drs. Thain and Rink, and Drs. Ugstad and LaRussa, USDA-APHIS Veterinary Service, met with the organizing committee of The Budweiser World Cup Finals, to be held in Las Vegas, beginning on April 20, 2005. The 2005 event will include an international show jumping competition and FEI International Dressage championships. Finalists from several European countries will be flown into Las Vegas and quarantines will have to be put into place. American horses and European horses will have to be separated spatially and temporally. USDA Veterinary Medical Officers and Animal Health Technicians will be in place to ensure compliance.
- On January 21st, Dr. Rink attended the Society of Range Management meeting in Fallon and gave an update on the 'Bighorn Sheep Project'. The two wildlife species that are going to influence land use in the Western United States most significantly are Sage Grouse and Bighorn Sheep. The Bighorn Sheep Project is a collaborative project between the Animal Disease Laboratory (ADL), Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and UNR to track disease transmission between livestock and wildlife and to investigate the causes of Bighorn Sheep die-offs.
- On January 31st the ADL hosted the January meeting of the Nevada West Nile Virus Working Group. The primary focus of the meeting was on planning state wide surveillance and testing for the 2005 mosquito season.
- Dr. Dan Crowell joined the Department on January 24th and took over the duties of Senior Veterinary Diagnostician at the Elko ADL. Dr. Bruce Branscomb retired on January 3rd, 2005 after working for the Department for 8 years and a total of 41 years in Veterinary Medicine.

Plant Industry, Las Vegas Office (Southern Nevada)

- Africanized Honey Bees (AHB)
The Las Vegas office received several AHB swarm calls in mid January. This was a few weeks earlier than normal.
- Agricultural Enforcement
Xenia Duranovic inspected 25 loads of nursery stock that were delivered to Las Vegas. One load was from a non-certified location in Arizona. At the request of the Arizona Department of Agriculture Xenia traced it to a local landscaper who had received the load. The shipment was red tagged and the next day sent back to Arizona. The landscaper was cited.
- Pest Control Operator and Licensing Program
In calendar year 2004, the Las Vegas office received 19,992 Wood Destroying Pests Inspection Reports. 138 conflicts of information were found. These conflicts sometimes arise when more than one inspection was done on the same property and the inspection reports differ significantly. 12 field inspections were conducted on these conflicts with 6 cases forwarded to Reno for enforcement. 160 of the reports were

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flagged for illegible or missing information. These were also forwarded for enforcement. Two cases of suspected fraud by companies not regulated by the Department were forwarded to the Attorney General's office for investigation.

Scott Cichowlaz conducted one - one hour "Laws" presentations at a continuing education course sponsored by Target Specialty Products in Las Vegas. The presentation was aimed at Nevada pest control licensees who needed continuing education credits. About 210 individuals attended.

- **Nursery**

Early this month Tom Smigel, Marv Berson, Xenia Duranovic and Marc Olson of the Las Vegas office held a teleconference with Peggy McKie and John O'Brien of the Reno office. The main topic of discussion was the updated quarantine regulations of *Phytophthora ramorum* (Sudden Oak Death or SOD) by the USDA. The new regulations stipulate that besides the quarantined counties in California and the one county in Oregon all nurseries in California, Oregon, and Washington will be regulated. In order for any nursery in these three states to ship SOD host or associated host plant material, they must first be inspected and found free of SOD. A list of the inspected nurseries will be available to the Nevada state nursery inspectors via the web.

Marv Berson completed 11 nursery inspections and 9 truck inspections. He also assisted an unlicensed landscaper in obtaining a nursery license. Marv attended a conference on Sonoran horticulture, a Division of Forestry hearing on State listing of rare plants and a Cooperative Weed Management meeting. Marv produced an updated quarantine summary chart for federal and state quarantines.

- **Training**

Las Vegas staff members Shirlene Wayland, Scott Cichowlaz, Tom Smigel and Darren Williams participated in and provided assistance to the Certified Applicator Training school held Jan. 20th & 21st. 130 attended the Las Vegas school. Scott corrected the Reno and Las Vegas tests and issued 92 certificates from the Las Vegas school and 87 certificates from the Reno school.

Scott Cichowlaz also gave a personalized certification school and examination session to Star Nursery employees. About 7 employees attended and all that attended were issued certifications in the Nursery / Greenhouse category.

- **Other Items of Interest**

Marc Olson attended the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Group meeting and the Public Information & Education Working Group meeting as an alternate for Tom Smigel. The groups were updated on the up coming interviews for a weed coordinator position in the Las Vegas office of the Department. This agriculturist II position will be funded through the Southern Nevada Public Lands Act and will concentrate on the weed problems in Clark County, in particular the weeds in the multiple species habitat conservation area.

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The annual pesticide disposal program was conducted in Las Vegas. Thirty-one sources contributed approximately 650 lbs of dry and 175 gallons of liquid unwanted pesticides.

Plant Industry, Reno and Winnemucca Offices (Northern Nevada)

- Lee Lawrence presented laws and regulation instruction to 100 plus pest control operators at Target Specialty Products' continuing education seminar at the Hidden Valley County Club.
- Two pest control companies were each fined \$500 for conducting pest control without a license. One of the companies was fined for working while on suspension for lack of insurance. Another pest control company was fined \$1,225 for performing termite pre-construction soil treatments in violation of treatment requirements.

Weights & Measures

- Progress continues on schedule for the construction of the petroleum laboratory and partial remodel of the weights and measures building.
- Follow up on consumer complaints for firewood and aviation fuel continues.
- Metrology laboratory was accredited by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) for 2005.
- Jay Steele was promoted to a weights and measures inspector for the Southern district.
- Due to heavy rains in Southern California, the pipeline serving Southern Nevada was shut down. With the shortage of fuel acceptable to Clark County, an EPA Enforcement Discretion was written. This acts as a waiver for fuel quality in an emergency situation.

Wildlife Services

- The proceedings from the twenty-first Vertebrate Pest Conference (VPC) were recently published and distributed. The Nevada Wildlife Services Program had four employees with five papers accepted for publishing. The following present and past employees had their papers published: 1.) Pete Coates, The Effects of Raven Removal on Sage Grouse Nest Success, 2.) Mike Smith, Capturing Problematic Urban Geese in Reno, Nevada: Goose Round-ups vs. Use of Alpha-Chlorase and Capturing Nuisance Urban Canada Geese Using the Bird Immobilizing Agent Alpha-Chlorase in Reno, Nevada: What We Learned 3.) Zack Bowers, Protecting Canada Geese on a

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Wildlife Management Area in East-Central Nevada and 4.) Jack Spencer Jr., Nevada Wildlife Resource Protection Overview: 2000 through 2003.

- On January 20th, East District Supervisor Kevin Lansford spoke with hotel and casino managers in Mesquite concerning pigeon problems experienced by the resorts. Informational pamphlets, including live-trapping equipment suppliers, were handed out. Questions concerning pigeon management were also answered.
- Also on January 20th, South District Supervisor Darren Williams assisted the Department by providing a presentation to approximately 130 students applying for a Nevada State Pesticide Applicators License. Topics discussed included USDA-Wildlife Services (WS) role in human-wildlife conflict management, methods applied to relieve those conflicts and statutory applications involved with this type of management. NDA and the students expressed their appreciation for WS participation in the training process.
- On Tuesday, January 25th, Darren Williams provided a power-point presentation to approximately 150 members of the National Wildlife Control Operators Association (NWCOA) at their annual seminar in Las Vegas. The presentation discussed WS role in Threatened and Endangered (T&E) species protection in Southern Nevada. NWCOA members and representatives expressed their appreciation for WS interesting and informative participation in the annual seminar.
- On January 27th, Wildlife Services District Supervisor Jack Spencer Jr. gave a 45 minute presentation to a group of private pest control operators in Sparks. The main topic for discussion was urban wildlife damage management. Approximately 200 people were in attendance.

Livestock I.D. & Agricultural Enforcement Division

- Chris Collis, George Dorsa, and Inspector Andrea Jackson worked BLM wild horse gathers in the Spruce Mtn., Pilot/Table Mtn., and Granite-Buffer Hills management areas this month resulting in approximately 2,000 head of horses being removed. Some of the horses removed were sent to BLM corrals in Nevada at Palomino Valley and some were sent to BLM corrals in Ridgecrest, Calif. for the adoption program.
- Administrator Jim Connelley attended the Elko session of the Cattlemen's Update tour and listened to the latest information on the National Animal Identification System as well as other pertinent topics and met with producers from the area.
- Ten officers from the Agriculture Enforcement Unit and Brand Inspector II's met in Elko during January for the annual in-service training required for maintenance of a POST peace officer certificate. Training included defensive tactics and firearms training and qualification.

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- Jim Connelley attended a meeting of the sub-committee of the Homeland Security Commission made up of representatives from 13 state agencies vying for a portion of the \$2,088,000 designated for state agencies in the 2005 Homeland Security Grant program.

Agriculture Enforcement statistics for December, 2004

<u>Officer Monthly Totals</u>	<u>#Vehicle stops</u>	<u>Warning citations</u>	<u>Court citations</u>	<u>Verbal warnings</u>	<u>Hold orders</u>	<u>Strays returned</u>	<u>Checksite Attendance</u>
	123	5	0	12	2	79	10